State of Connecticut
Environment Committee
Written Testimony opposing SB443
March 17, 2014

I am submitting written testimony in opposition to the Environmental Committee's bill on pesticide use (SB443). I am testifying as a father of a seven-year-old athlete from Newington, CT. I also possess a Supervisory Pesticide Applicator's license from the CT DEEP.

Environmental groups often use emotion-based arguments to further their anti-pesticide agenda rather than relying on scientific research to portray the truth about the risks and benefit associated with their use.

The proposed changes to the current regulations will increase the risk of injury to our minors. Deteriorating conditions of athletic facilities will lead to joint injuries as turf resiliency declines under excessive wear due to multi-season use, lack of access to insecticides will increase risk of allergic reaction to stings from burrowing venomous insects, and poisonous and invasive vegetation left unchecked will consume our athletic fields and facilities due to loss of effective herbicides that could be applied long after school is out of session. Deteriorating athletic facilities will lead to decline in participation in athletic programs, which provide structure and valuable life lessons for our children.

A cooperative effort is required to preserve the quality of our recreational facilities and minimize the potential risk of exposure to the public and the environment. The proper approach is to rely on the knowledge and experience of professionals from DEEP, DPH, and University of Connecticut to determine the best way to utilize Best Management Practices, Integrated Pest Management, and the Best Available Technology to minimize the risk to our children, community, and the environment. IPM protocols, which were developed as part of a cooperative effort, are already in place to reduce the use and reliance on pesticides, thereby reducing the risk to children.

Research is required to determine the nature and gravity of the actual risk based on the measured exposures to applications made under current IPM guidelines, combined with the intrinsic toxicological characteristics of reduced risk pesticides and the best available technology. Similar project have been conducted to determine exposure for other activities and have produced measurable results in real world situations. This is the kind of science based information that leads to effective legislation that protects the public and preserves their interests.

Respectfully submitted,
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